

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 004701

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TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 004701

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH, US

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE VISIT BY THAI FOREIGN MINISTER TO
DIEGO GARCIA

REF: BANGKOK 25656

1. THE BRITISH AND WE AGREE WITH YOUR ASSESSMENT THAT
VISIT BY FOREIGN MINISTER CHATCHAI TO DIEGO OFFERS FEW
BENEFITS AND SOME REAL PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, GIVEN OUR
PRESENT PRACTICE OF STAGING AIRCRAFT THROUGH THAILAND FOR
SUPPORT OF THE DIEGO FACILITY AND CONTINUED BRITISH
AGREEMENT TO VISIT PROVIDED IT PRODUCES NO PUBLICITY, WE
AGREE THAT A FLAT NO WOULD BE TACTICALLY COUNTER
PRODUCTIVE.

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PAGE 02 STATE 004701

2. YOU SHOULD, AS SUGGESTED REFTTEL, ATTEMPT TO PLAY OUT THE STRING AS LONG AS POSSIBLE IN HOPES THAT CHATCHAI WILL LOSE INTEREST EVENTUALLY. STRESSING THE RIGORS OF THE JOURNEY, YOU MIGHT ALSO WISH TO POINT OUT THAT THERE ARE NO FACILITIES ON DIEGO GARCIA FOR AN OVERNIGHT STAY BY SOMEONE OF CHATCHAI'S RANK. AS A RESULT, THE ENTIRE JOURNEY WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE IN ONE DAY, MAKING THE TRIP QUITE DEMANDING.

3. INFORMAL SOUNDINGS OF THE BRITISH INDICATE THAT WHILE HMG POSES NO OBJECTION TO THE VISIT IN PRINCIPLE, THEY WOULD PREFER TO HAVE IT TAKE PLACE AT SOME FUTURE DATE. YOU MIGHT WISH TO DRAW ON THIS, NOTING THAT US/UK DISCUSSIONS ON DIEGO HAVE REACHED A DELICATE STAGE AND THAT A LATER TIME FOR A VISIT WOULD BE MORE CONVENIENT. IN ANY EVENT, THE BRITISH DESIRE FOR NO PUBLICITY REMAINS A PREREQUISITE TO ANY VISIT.
KISSINGER

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